



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

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**MAYOR RAHM EMANUEL ANNOUNCES \$290 MILLION PUBLIC SPACE CAPITAL PLAN TO INVEST IN HUNDREDS OF PARKS AND RECREATIONAL AREAS ACROSS THE CITY**

*First \$7 Million in Private Funds Raised to Begin Final Design and Construction of Bloomingdale Trail; Exelon Makes Leadership Gift of \$5 Million, Boeing and CNA Contribute \$1 Million Each*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today announced a coordinated citywide effort to invest \$290 million over the next five years to complete more than 800 projects in parks, recreational areas and green spaces in neighborhoods across the city. Under this plan, nearly every Chicago resident will see a capital improvement within a 10-minute walk from their home, and the work will create 1,200 construction jobs.

Projects slated for completion during 2012 and 2013 include new Chicago River boat houses; new park construction; new community field houses; new artificial turf fields; new playgrounds; and facility restoration. The Park District will also rehabilitate 100 basketball courts by August and build eight new artificial turf fields across the city in 2012.

"Parks, trails and green spaces play an important role in building communities and the quality of life of all residents of Chicago," said Mayor Emanuel. "By building new parks and upgrading facilities, we do more than provide children with playgrounds or bicyclists with paths, we strengthen our neighborhoods."

As part of this effort, the Bloomingdale Trail will begin its final engineering and design phase this week, with construction to begin in late 2012 and completion by fall 2014. This next phase is made possible by the first round of private donations – \$5 million from Exelon, and \$1 million each from CNA and Boeing, which made the first donation. The Trust for Public Land (TPL) has established a Leadership Council that will continue to work with the City to raise \$35 million in private support for construction and stewardship. The City has also secured \$37 million in federal funds and \$2 million in Park District funds, for a total of \$46 million.

"Chicago is a world-class city and under Mayor Emanuel's leadership, the Bloomingdale Trail will be a world-class addition to the city's park system," said Beth White, Director of The Trust for Public Land's Chicago office. "Chicago is also about neighborhoods and the Bloomingdale will tie together some of the city's most exciting and diverse neighborhoods. Building this transformative



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public space takes a public-private partnership and it is wonderful to see Chicago's generous corporate leaders stepping up to this effort, including Exelon, CNA, and Boeing."

"Exelon is proud to support The Trust for Public Land and the Bloomingdale Trail project, particularly our efforts to develop an environmental educational curriculum that will help teachers in nearby Chicago Public Schools to use the trail as an outdoor resource center to learn about nature and the history of the trail," said Steve Solomon, vice president of corporation relations for Exelon. "Exelon's \$5 million grant is the largest single grant in our company's history, demonstrating our strong commitment both to the City of the Chicago and to the environment in the communities and neighborhoods that we serve."

"By contributing the first major gift to support the Bloomingdale Trail project, Boeing continues its long tradition of leadership and innovation. We are proud to support The Trust for Public Land and the civic engagement of communities all along the trail to ensure this wonderful park - one that re-imagines an old unused railroad line - will be used in the future by many Chicagoans," said Lianne Stein, vice president, Boeing Global Corporate Citizenship.

"At CNA, we know that people make the difference. And so that's why we're supporting The Trust for Public Land and the creation of the Bloomingdale Trail, because we know it will make a major difference in the lives of all the Chicagoans who will use it in the future," said Sarah Pang, Senior Vice President, Corporate Communications and Executive Director, CNA Foundation.

The Bloomingdale Trail will be a 2.65-mile multi-use recreational trail built along an elevated rail line atop Bloomingdale Avenue on Chicago's northwest side. The Trail will be the world's longest elevated trail and a major tourist draw, but more importantly it will significantly increase transportation options for residents on Chicago's northwest side. The tracks, which are currently unused, will be converted into a safe greenway that accommodates both pedestrian and bike travel, and connects the west side to existing bike lanes that feed into the Loop. There will be multiple access points that double as neighborhood parks and link the trail to existing bike and transit routes. The Damen and Western stops on the Blue Line, the Clybourn Metra station, and the North Avenue, Fullerton, Western Kedzie, Kimball, California, Milwaukee and Ashland busses all pass under, over or nearby the Trail. Thousands of Chicagoans will be able to use the trail to commute to work each morning, and it will serve as a safe route to school for thousands of children who attend one of the 12 public and parochial schools within easy walking distance. Construction will be completed by Fall 2014.

In addition to Bloomingdale Trail, program highlights of the five-year plan include:

- 180 acres of new acquisitions impacting 100,000 residents
- 100 "Slam Dunk" basketball court renovations impacting 150,000 youth ages 13-19
- 12 new parks or major park developments impacting 300,000 residents
- 20 new playgrounds impacting 100,000 children ages 2-14



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- 8 new artificial turf fields impacting 50,000 youth under age 18
- 6 new community buildings impacting 220,000 residents

**2012 Projects**

Projects expected to be completed this year include the 31<sup>st</sup> St. Harbor; 180 acres of new acquisitions; “Slam Dunk” basketball courts; Garfield Park Conservatory restoration; HVAC management systems; and renovations to McFetridge Sports Center.

The new \$100 million 31<sup>st</sup> St. Harbor is scheduled to open in May and will offer 1,000 boat slips. The site will feature a green roof parking garage; fully accessible playground and park expansion; underpass to separate vehicular traffic from cyclists and pedestrians on the Lakefront Trail; and a new public fishing pier and boat launch.

The Chicago Park District will increase the amount of open space available in the city to more than 8,300 with the addition of 180 acres of new acquisitions worth \$15 million. Park #553 “Celotex,” Park #565 “Indian Ridge,” and Park #568 “Rosehill Cemetery,” were previously acquired by the City of Chicago and will be transferred to the Chicago Park District for development and future maintenance.

The Chicago Park District will invest \$2.5 million to rehabilitate basketball courts in citywide parks as part of the “Slam Dunk” initiative. The courts will encourage team building and an active lifestyle for an estimated 150,000 teenagers who have a court within a half-mile of their home.

The Garfield Park Conservatory will receive a \$10 million restoration that will both modernize the historic landmark and also repair the storm damage in the Fern, Desert and Show Rooms. The Chicago Park District will save \$1 million in energy, operational and capital costs by integrating new HVAC management systems at 13 locations (Lincoln Park Conservatory and Broadway Armory, Calumet, Carver, Fosco, Gill, Gompers, Jesse Owens, Mann, Taylor-Lauridsen, Valley Forge, and Willye White Parks). Including the 37 locations completed last year, this \$4 million project will provide total cost savings of more than \$3.5 million annually by 2013.

The McFetridge Sports Center in California Park houses the Chicago Park District’s only indoor ice skating rink. The skating rink will be replaced as part of the \$5.4 million renovations to the facility, and it will also undergo upgrades to the tennis court lighting and HVAC energy management.

**2012-2013 Projects**

Projects slated for completion this year into next year include the new Chicago River boat houses; new park construction; new community field houses; new artificial turf fields; new playgrounds; and facility restoration.



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Funded by \$16-18 million of public and private investments, four new Chicago River boat houses will increase recreational opportunities along the river and will provide community rooms, concessions, fitness centers, restrooms, storage and direct river access. River Park and Ping Tom Park locations will open in 2012 and Clark Park and Park #561 at Eleanor St. and 28<sup>th</sup> St. will open the following year.

The design and construction of 12 new parks or major park redevelopments are underway for this year. This \$30 million project that will impact 300,000 residents includes such amenities as community and vegetable gardens, nature preserves, athletic fields, courts, playgrounds and passive recreation. The Chicago Park District works in collaboration with the community during the design phase to reflect the local programming needs. Locations/projects include: Fosco Park expansion; Greenebaum Park; Rockwell Gardens; Park #503 "South Chicago;" Park #510 "Livingston Field;" Park #553 "Celotex;" Park #561 "16<sup>th</sup> and Wabash;" Millennium Reserve; Park #568 "Rosehill Cemetery;" Rosenblum Park; Skinner Park expansion; and Stanton Park.

Next year, two new Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) accredited field houses will be built: Ping Tom Park (\$16 million) and Park #560 "Jesse White" (\$12 million). Chicago Park District field houses are community anchors, providing a safe place for various recreational activities and programs.

Eight new artificial turf athletic fields will be built for \$11 million and will provide recreational opportunities for the 50,000 youth who live within a half-mile of these parks. These athletic fields can be used year-round and save on maintenance costs.

Twenty new accessible playgrounds for children ages 2-14 will be built throughout the city. This \$9 million project will give 100,000 families who live within a 10-minute walk of these playgrounds the opportunity to be active.

Twelve existing facilities will undergo major renovations to upgrade operational systems, maintain structural integrity, improve accessibility, and ensure accommodation of various programming opportunities for the community. Locations for this \$12 million project include: Austin Town Hall Park; Clarendon Park; Fuller Park; Garfield Park gold dome; Humboldt Park field house; Independence Park; Indian Boundary Park; Rutherford Sayre Park; Shabbona Park; Sherman Park; South Shore Cultural Center; and Stanton Park.